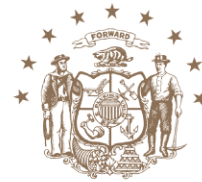




SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT



For Immediate Release

January 7th, 2015

Contact: Rep. Sondy Pope

608-266-3520

REP POPE: VOUCHER SCHOOLS NEED MORE ACCOUNTABILITY

(MADISON) Today, State Representative Sondy Pope (D- Cross Plains) introduced legislation to address the growing need to hold Wisconsin's voucher schools accountable for the taxpayer dollars they receive and the education standards to which their students are held.

The proposal, LRB 0087/P1, seeks to hold all taxpayer-funded schools – public and voucher – to the same standards in order to strengthen Wisconsin's educational system and prevent further fraudulent use of taxpayer dollars. The bill would require all voucher school teachers to be licensed; adopt criminal background checks for all staff; require the implementation of graduation standards; and improve overall transparency between voucher schools and taxpayers.

These accountability standards will prevent fraud and wasteful practices and provide necessary oversight for taxpayer funded, for-profit schools. Governor Walker's expansion of the voucher program has reduced funds available for our public community schools and the purpose of this bill is to help curb further damage.

The requirements of this bill are simple safeguards that should be expected of any institution receiving public funds. As many quality private schools already meet or exceed these expectations, these new requirements should have little effect on these institutions, but will make a drastic change to underperforming or even fraudulent schools such as the LifeSkills Academy which recently left nearly 200 students seeking a seat in another classroom.

"It is my hope that my colleagues recognize the need to prevent another disaster such as the incident with LifeSkills Academy, which squandered over \$2 million of taxpayer money," stated Rep. Pope. "It is time for sensible accountability and stronger standards to make sure that every Wisconsin child has the opportunity for a quality education."

###



SONDY POPE

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
80TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

